

Remarks

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are requested.

Claim 3 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 3 and 5-7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Kobayashi (US 5,936,455). Claim 8 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kobayashi.

Claims 11, 12 and 14-19 have been indicated as being allowed. The Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter.

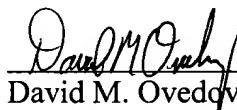
In order to expedite prosecution of the application, claims 3 and 5-8 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter contained therein. As a result, only allowed claims 11, 12 and 14-19 remain pending.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that there are issues remaining which must be resolved before allowance of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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